CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

SOCIETY, POLITICS, *and the* SEARCH *for* COMMUNITY *in* RUSSIA

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The degree to which contemporary discussions of Russia avoid dealing with Russian society is striking.[1] This was not always (and is still not entirely) the case. Cultural historians in particular have long studied the evolution, revolutionary dismantling, and partial persistence of the institutions underpinning social relations, and the end of the Soviet Union brought a revival of interest in the long story of Russian society. The difficulties of Russia's post-Soviet transition, however, and its "failure" to democratize, have led many to take society out of the picture: Because the social factors that may have led to Russia's retrenched authoritarianism seemed so deterministic and path-dependent, social scientists have often preferred to ignore them, looking instead either to agency or to the impact of formal political institutions, present and past. Even the long-running argument about Russians' supposedly weak social capital and overall lack of trust is generally explained as a result not of societal factors but of political choices made by elites, mostly over the course of the twentieth century.

I will not deal here with the question of whether those disciplinary and methodological preferences were as intellectually robust as they were politically correct; much of the social science done in and on Russia in recent years has been excellent and enlightening. Nor would I suggest that no (or even not enough) attention is being paid to Russian society; indeed,

fascinating work continues to be produced by sociologists and anthropologists of various ilk. But the vogue for politics and political economy has meant that this social research, when put in the broader context of Russian area studies, is almost inevitably reduced to a dependent variable. Certainly, politics and the political economy do produce social results. My task here, however, is to demonstrate that social factors may also produce political results.

On the surface, this seems obvious enough. The transformation of economic grievance into political mobilization in Pikalevo, Zabaikalsk, and other so-called *monogoroda*—towns heavily dependent on a single industry for employment and revenue—and also in larger cities, including Vladivostok and Kaliningrad, forced the Russian government to react, through a combination of co-optation and repression, where it would probably have preferred to remain aloof. The regional elections in the fall of 2009 provided a second illustration of the hypothesis that complete political complacency cannot be expected of the population if the government does not hold up its economic side of the bargain. Perhaps more importantly, however, the elections may have demonstrated the remarkable degree to which a large section of the population, if not the majority, is willing to buy into the system even when it falters. And finally, the reemergence of the motorists' movement—with new tactics and new leadership but the same demands—reflects the ability of Russian society to generate and sustain grassroots engagement and, indeed, to set at least a portion of the political agenda in a sustained manner, despite what we think we know about social capital and trust.

But these examples are almost too obvious. The question I want to address here is as follows: Are there fundamental social processes under way that have the potential to drive the evolution of the Russian state and, if so, how might that occur during the next ten years? In this chapter, I outline what I believe to be "four and a half" key phenomena and then lay out two basic scenarios for how they might evolve—one that is inertial (but not static), in which current trends continue; and another in which certain key changes occur that allow society and state–society relations in Russia to develop along a normatively more "optimistic" pathway to 2020.

Four and a Half Key Social Phenomena

Before I launch into a discussion of the "four and a half" key social phenomena that I argue will shape Russia's future, I should explain two basic assumptions that underpin my understanding of Russian society. The first has to do with deinstitutionalization: Russia is not entirely devoid of social institutions, but it is close. In treating institutions here, I take the sociological definition of an institution as a set of ingrained rules and norms governing behavior for individuals or groups of individuals that allows one to predict with reasonable accuracy what the reaction will be to any given action. Thus, in saying that Russia is almost devoid of institutions, I do not refer to the myriad establishments laid out on paper, enshrined in bricks and mortar, and endowed with budgets of varying generosity; rather, I refer to the fact that none of these "paper" institutions—whether the law in general, the apparatus of the state, or higher education or the Russian Orthodox Church—allows Russian citizens to predict with reasonable accuracy how any given social or state–societal interaction will proceed. Moreover, with the partial exception of the Caucasus and other long-standing ethnic communities in the Urals, Siberia, and the far north, the Soviet Union and the turmoil of transition together succeeded in eviscerating whatever horizontal social institutions may have existed in the past, whether religious, ethnic, tribal, land-based, familial, or other.

The second assumption flows from the first: In a deinstitutionalized environment, certainty is at a premium, and the balance between certainty and uncertainty is the key commodity in any social interaction. This increases the relative trust placed in people who may be termed *nashi*—ours—and reduces trust in people who may be considered *chuzhie*—other (although it may have no discernible impact on the overall stock of trust). This endows those able through their status or station to manufacture and manipulate uncertainty with a tremendous degree of power. And this catastrophically lowers the appetite for risk.

That last point about risk leads directly to the first of the four and a half key phenomena. There is a common myth in the discussion of Russian politics—and particularly Russian civil society and civic engagement—that Russians are passive. This is not true: Russians are aggressively immobile. The difference is more than semantic. Passive people may not be

easily led, but they are relatively easily pushed. Aggressively immobile people are difficult to move in any circumstances, precisely because their immobility is strategic and rational. An environment bereft of social institutions is one in which there are few if any shared and replicable pathways to success. As a result, the relative comfort and prosperity that any Russian citizen may enjoy is the result of a singular, unique set of circumstances, owing exclusively to that citizen's ability to cope with her or his uncertain environment (the order of the pronouns here is not arbitrary; women are generally significantly better at coping in Russia than men). Change, then, threatens to undermine these achievements, potentially forcing the citizen to start again in the face of uncertainty—a wholly unattractive prospect. This is true on both the micro and macro levels. Russians living in failing cities such as Pikalevo are thus unwilling to leave not because they feel good about their prospects at home but because they have no certainty that they will be able to navigate a new set of bureaucratic and other formal and informal relationships in a new setting. Similarly, Russians oppose liberalizing and democratizing reforms not because they are happy with the status quo of political and economic monopolization but because any large-scale change risks sweeping away achievements built on extremely shallow foundations.

The second phenomenon is the particular way in which the so-called resource curse has manifested itself in Russia: Rather than fuel outright repression (à la Myanmar) or heavy-handed populism (à la Venezuela), the abundance of natural resources and the associated rent flows have cushioned a mutually agreeable divorce between the government and its people, following seven decades of overly intimate relations. It is often said that the implicit Putin-era social contract in Russia has been one in which the population agree to ignore politics in return for economic growth. I would modify that somewhat: The implicit social contract, if there is one, affords maximum autonomy to both sides of the bargain, provided neither significantly impinges on the interests and comfort of the other. It is an inherently fraught arrangement, however, similar to Soviet-era divorces in which irreconcilable spouses were forced to continue living in the same apartment; there is bound to be some friction. Oil, gas, and the economic growth they generate provide some lubrication, but there remain limits to the degree of alienation that is possible. The fact of shared space becomes

most evident on Russia's roads, where the elite and ordinary citizens live on two sides of an almost institutionalized lawlessness, in which the elite are forbidden nothing and the non-elite have no recourse.

The third phenomenon is thus increasing friction. The more the elite and the non-elite crystallize and defend their own individual achievements—whether in the form of armored motorcades or high fences around even modest private landholdings—the more conflict becomes inevitable. The debasing of the public space in order to maintain the private—what Michael Burawoy referred to as "involution"—helped people cope with the tumult of transition, but as Russia's "new normal" has been established and appetites begin to grow again, there is a creeping privatization of the commons.[2] It is not only the roads that have seemingly become the private domain of the elite, together with the lives of those who happen to be on them. Moscow's sidewalks and courtyards are continually and repeatedly privatized by anyone who wants to park a car. Public nature reserves become the private hunting grounds of anyone with sufficient access to a helicopter, and the country's forests are littered with the remains of countless picnics, as though the forest itself were disposable. This relentless extension of the rules of elite and mass private behavior into Russia's shared social spaces is an irritant for all involved, as each individual encounters behavior consonant with his or her own behavior but dissonant with his or her personal interests. The natural reaction is an attempt to extend, provided the means are available, the power of one's professed (but not performed) social norms onto others—an attempt that, given Russia's lack of functioning social and sociopolitical institutions, is doomed to fail and produce only more irritation.

The fourth phenomenon is a relatively new means of coping with the second and third phenomena, what I will call "individual modernization." The advent of globalization—by which I mean not so much trade and economic interdependence as global communication and global culture—opens up avenues that were not available to Soviet-era dissidents. Certainly, gaining access through illicit radio reception or samizdat to the world beyond the USSR was an important part of both challenging the Soviet regime and building an autonomous moral space outside its ideological boundaries but inside its geographical borders. But the end of censorship, the opening of borders, and the growing availability of the

Internet and other communication technologies has fed an explosion of individual strategies of identity formation within modern Russia. Especially in Moscow, but not only there, adherents can be found for all the fashion trends, schools of thought, political and social undercurrents, and economic projects present in the world at large. Young, educated, dynamic, and mobile Russians—as well as a good many of their older compatriots—are seemingly as likely to identify themselves with a global meaning as with a local one. This is true in much of the world, but in the Russian context of deinstitutionalization, state/society alienation, and the constant friction of the public space, it takes on particular importance: While remaining physically present in Russia (or at least resident), Russians may take themselves socially, politically, and intellectually out of the Russian space. The consequences of this are contradictory. On the one hand, this is potentially tremendously liberating for a large number of the country's best and brightest. On the other hand, however, it greatly lowers the degree to which those same best and brightest may be willing to invest in the modernization of Russia's own social space.

The "half" phenomenon, finally, lies somewhere between the third and the fourth phenomena just described and is this: Despite its faults, Russia's current system of social and political relations has its adherents. These are not just those in the elite and below it who are consistently able to maximize their benefit from the manufacture and manipulation of uncertainty. Even those who are not on the winning end of that bargain invest in the system's survival. Witness, for example, an appeal made in June 2010 by a group of schoolteachers in the town of Voskresensk, not far from Moscow, to President Dmitri Medvedev. The teachers, who were drafted into serving on the local board of elections during the municipal elections in October 2009, now find themselves at the center of an investigation into electoral fraud in which they themselves admit they were complicit. What they want from Medvedev, though, is not to right the wrong but an intercession simply to prevent them from being prosecuted. Referring to the hundreds of thousands of ordinary Russians who, like the Voskresensk teachers, helped falsify elections in 2009, human rights activist Sergei Kovalev told Ekho Moskvy radio that "lying has ceased to be a means of hiding the truth and has become instead a ritual of loyalty and patriotism." That may be overstating the case; the Voskresensk teachers are unlikely

to have acted out of any great patriotism, and they were probably threatened with dismissal or at least docked pay if they did not cooperate. But the reality is, when faced with a situation in which they could protect their positions by cooperating with the investigation in service of the truth, they chose instead to seek shelter in the lie. This is a deeper degree of co-optation than we see among the young men and women who join Nashi and other government-run youth groups in exchange for a trip to a lake and money on a cellphone account; the latter is simply opportunistic, while the former is calculated.

Understanding the Politics of Society

Much of the discussion of states and societies—and thus of politics—is guided by the standard Weberian definition of a state, with its emphasis on the effective monopolization of legitimate violence. In this conceptualization, the state is almost always seen as the active party, seeking to generate and maximize its power, whereas society is at best confined to the role of resistance to or acceptance of that power and, thus, the legitimization of the state's monopoly on forceful coercion. The "systems" approach launched by Talcott Parsons went some distance toward elucidating the complex interrelations between political and societal actors and institutions that underpin this arrangement, but it has been roundly criticized for a teleological assumption that some systems are developed and others are developing, with all trajectories leading to a similar (read Western) endpoint.

This chapter is guided by a somewhat different conception, proposed by Joel Migdal under the headline "State in Society"—in other words, the conceit that states, broadly speaking, are rooted in and derivative of the societies they purport to govern. Migdal places the emphasis on "process—on the ongoing struggles among shifting coalitions over the rules for daily behavior":

> These processes determine how societies and states create and maintain distinct ways of structuring day-to-day life—the nature of the rules that govern people's behavior, whom they benefit and whom they disadvantage, which sorts of elements unite people

> and which divide them, what shared meaning people hold about their relations with others and about their place in the world. And these processes also ordain the ways that rules and patterns of domination and subordination are challenged and change.[3]

Migdal, in turn, draws importantly on Edward Shils's use of the concept of community. Thus, Shils writes that

> . . . a community is not just a group of concrete and particular persons; it is, more fundamentally, a group of persons acquiring their significance by their embodiment of values which transcend them and by their conformity with standards and rules from which they derive their dignity.[4]

To Migdal, it is this process of creation of community that ultimately guides the formation of states. The crucial aspects of this relationship are brought into particularly sharp focus in social, political, and economic environments undergoing rapid change, such as Russia. In these sorts of settings, it is perhaps to be expected that citizens—individually *and* collectively—have a difficult time arriving at the shared rules of behavior, and thus shared values, that lead to community. Migdal writes:

> In such bewildering and fragmented settings, individuals must respond not only to the constraints and opportunities posed by one organization but by many. Some of these organizations exist side by side peacefully, but others are struggling actively with one another over what the rules of the game should be. Individuals thus confront a fundamental lack of coherence in their social worlds, with various organizations proposing contradictory values and modes of behavior. Models that assume a fundamental unity underlying one's actions, feelings, and thoughts are inadequate for explaining the diverse strategies people use in acting within these heterogeneous organizational settings.[5]

The "four and a half" social phenomena outlined above illustrate how this dilemma plays out in Russia. With the fracturing of the public space,

the flattening of the hierarchies that governed Soviet interactions, and the dismantling of the institutions of certainty in social life, citizens in all social strata retreated from the public space, fortified their private spaces, and then engaged in a privatization of the commons. This spectacular devaluation of community is self-reinforcing, proving to all participants that their strategies are justified and correct, precisely because everyone else's strategies are simultaneously identical (in their individualism) and threatening (in their rejection of the communal).

But this is not to say that Russians are valueless. With the evaporation of broad social institutions, citizens and elites alike have fallen back on residual institutions. Thus, the particularistic networks and arrangements of family, friendship, clan, ethnicity, and *chin* hold more value than other arrangements—such as law-bound institutions—that might inculcate more universalistic values. An excellent illustration of how this works is provided by an anthropological study of a remote community in Siberia, where David Anderson found "numerous examples of institutions which truly mediate civil, political and economic interests," in large part because he did not look for them in the formalistic, "differentiated" categories proposed by the mainstream civil society literature, but rather by observing everyday life in the town.[6] These institutions, however, are highly particular, pertaining either to ethnic or uniquely local economic and social circumstances. The challenge for Russia is thus to aggregate the trust generated in such institutions into forms that can be linked and propagated at a national level.

It could (and, indeed, has been) argued that the fault in this failure to aggregate trust lies in a problem of values—or, more precisely, of culture—that has roots considerably deeper than those of the present political arrangement. Because the object of this chapter is to look, however tentatively, into the future, I must deal with the suggestion that it is determined by the past. The most systematic argument for path-dependency in Russia has been put forward by Oleg Kharkhordin, Mikhail Afanasev, and Richard Pipes, who write (separately) that Orthodox, absolutist, and patrimonial models of social interaction are, to quote Pipes, "rooted in the failure of Russian statehood to evolve from a private into a public institution" and thus encourage not the consolidation of community but, in the words of Kharkhordin, the "diffusion of civic life."[7]

There is some debate as to the source of such "archaic" tendencies, with Kharkhordin and others suggesting that the dominance of the old is a result of the failure of the new, whereas Afanasev argues that the new fails precisely because of the dominance of the old. And it is exactly because of this fundamental and irreconcilable disagreement that the historicist argument holds little or no explanatory value for contemporary phenomena in Russia. When Russians today face challenges in social interactions, they are confronted simultaneously and inseparably with the dominance of the old and the failure of the new. Thus, in guiding decisions regarding social interactions, neither of these phenomena is causally prior to the other. In other words, Russian citizens inevitably make decisions based on factors that are present *now*, and it is this immediacy that both gives meaning to the past and creates the future.

Immediacy, of course, is the fundamental concept of game theory, an approach that models human behavior in social settings based on the rapid resolution of present dilemmas based on the unambiguous evaluation of past experiences and future consequences. The political game theorist Margaret Levi uses game-theoretical approaches to argue that citizens exercise "contingent consent" vis-à-vis the demands of their states—which, in our conceptualization, are the reflections of the rules set or accepted by communities—and that the propensity to consent increases in proportion to the degree to which "citizens perceive the government to be trustworthy," "the proportion of other citizens complying," and the ability of "citizens [to] receive information confirming" the prior two indicators.[8]

Following Levi, Charles Tilly asks the question "How have members of trust networks defended themselves and their resources against predation?"—which is particularly relevant to Russia, where predation has become the dominant strategy of certain groups of elites. The answer, Tilly finds through a broad comparative study, is a combination of three strategies: "The *concealment* strategy . . . fortifies the boundary between insiders and outsiders by means of secrecy and dissimulation. The *clientage* strategy . . . depends on some power holder's patronage, usually at a handsome price, for defense against other potential predators. *Dissimulation* . . . involves conceding just enough compliance with rulers' demands and regulations to hold off close surveillance and expropriation."[9]

In essence, all these strategies are an escape from politics, because in the system to which they pertain, politics is a game of predation. In other words, what one observes in Russia can be explained as a natural reaction both to the anticommunal rules of behavior that encourage authoritarianism and the ways in which that authoritarian rule is exercised. Democratization, then, is a story of the reintegration of citizens into politics through the regeneration of a meaningful political community:

> To the extent that people integrate their trust networks into public politics, they come to rely on governmental performance for maintenance of those networks. They also gain power, individual and collective, through the connections to government those networks mediate. They acquire an unbreakable interest in governmental performance. The political stakes matter. Paying taxes, buying governmental securities, yielding private information to officials, depending on government for benefits, and releasing network members for military service cement that interest and promote active bargaining over the terms of its fulfillment.[10]

It is thus a mistake to assume, as many normative and historicist theorists do, that rules derive from values. Indeed, it is the other way around: Rules are written to make human interactions more effective and predictable (at least for those writing the rules), and when they prove themselves to be sufficiently beneficial to a sufficiently large (or powerful) group of people in a community, over time they evolve into values. The question for the remainder of this chapter is "What are the factors that could drive a shift in Russia from the dominance of the individual to the value of the communal?"

Russia 2020: Scenarios for the Future

From where we stand today, there appear to be two potential scenarios for the future: one inertial, in which existing trends continue until they descend into outright crisis; and a second, in which a few key factors shift and a more "optimistic" storyline emerges. I start with the first, as

a baseline. To call this scenario inertial, however, is not to say that it is static; social processes cannot simply stand still, and it is unfathomable that nothing at all—or even nothing significant—would change over the next ten years.

In the inertial scenario, all the phenomena described above remain in place: aggressive immobility, state/society alienation, increasing social friction, blossoming individual modernization, and an active conservative constituency. Over time, as the state's retrograde apparatus becomes increasingly ineffective and continuing political and economic monopolies reduce marginal economic growth to nearly zero, social friction increases and comfortable alienation becomes harder and harder to maintain.

To an extent, we can already see this scenario unfolding. The nationalist riots that gripped Moscow in December 2010 bear witness to virtually all the phenomena described above. Rioters in the hundreds and thousands, many of whom perceive themselves to be victims of marginalization and relative deprivation, and who are unable to partake of the economic glamour that has become so conspicuous in the capital, moved concertedly and violently into the public space, claiming the commons for their own. The authorities did their best to ignore them; President Dmitri Medvedev "tweeted" first about an Elton John concert, and only then about the riots, promising blandly that those guilty would be punished; Prime Minister Vladimir Putin remained all but silent on the issue for several days. In the end, however, this separation could not be maintained: Riot police engaged, political interventions were held, pressure was applied.

The broader lesson that was learned, however, was that the commons, like nature, abhor a vacuum. Individuals, whether ordinary citizens or the elite, may temporarily enjoy the delusion that the space between their private refuges—the streets on which they drive, the metro in which they commute, the squares on which they walk—are empty, airless, and soundless; but they are not. The fact of rioters in the streets and in the metro, the omnipresent but largely invisible threat of violence and personal harm, compounded by the absence of trusted sources of information, for a time turned the commons into the jungle, a state of nature in which life could indeed be "nasty, brutish, and short." And until the rioters themselves went home, nobody—not the public, not the state—had the power to restore order.

Returning to the scenario, this increasing friction eventually pushes the state into a more forward relationship with society, first to set rules in defense of elite privilege, and then to regulate social relations themselves to maintain stability. But because nothing changes within the state itself—the active conservative constituency is sufficient to overcome any pressure from the creative and entrepreneurial classes, whose political ties with Russia are increasingly weak—this amounts to a reprivatization of the commons, rather than a deprivatization. Thus, non-elite individuals are pushed out of the common space, in the name of harmony and stability, but are then increasingly deprived of access to it altogether, as the captured state redistributes the benefits of the public space to the elite.

Is it not possible that Russian citizens, seeing the commons increasingly occupied by the elite, would react and demand change, much as did Egyptians and Tunisians in January and February 2011? In theory, yes. Often, the failure of Russians—and, indeed, of people in underdeveloped countries around the world—to place "sufficient" value on the commons is explained with reference to poverty, which theoretically prejudices particular and material interests over those that are universal and ephemeral. Unfortunately, there is insufficient rigorous research on poverty, or deprivation more broadly, in Russia and its impact on political engagement that would allow us to draw robust conclusions. However, research in India shows that poverty is correlated neither with a lack of support for democracy nor with levels of "political efficacy and . . . participation"; however, significantly correlated are levels of education, information, social capital, and access. Similar results have been reported in Africa and other parts of South Asia.[11] And developments in North Africa have underscored the validity of these findings.

It is not, however, that simple. An uprising from below will trigger a response from above. Indeed, Adam Przeworski argues that the problem of poverty and democracy resides not with the poor but with the rich:

> Increased participation of the poor is a threat to democracy only in situations where elites, fearing drastic redistribution, are prone to overthrow democracy. For the poor themselves, democracy might be the only viable means to get what they want. Yet, if they act precipitously, they may lose even that chance.[12]

The situation Przeworski describes fits Russia almost perfectly. A slow crisis may be expected to encourage splits within the elite, with those less certain of their future either exiting the system or lobbying for gradual change, much as the so-called 1960s generation did in the USSR, emboldened by the Khrushchevian "thaw" and frustrated by Brezhnevite stagnation. But such politically lethargic change will look to the masses like inertia (which, in effect, it is), and any uprising in response will make no distinction between the relatively more and less conservative members of the old guard. (Russian society tried to make that distinction once and is quite convinced that it did so in vain.) The result will be a reconsolidation of the elite (minus, perhaps, whatever marginal portion jumps ship) in defense of its status and privilege and a standoff with the mobilized sections of the public, the outcome of which is deeply uncertain.

This, then, is a scenario of alienation pushed to its limits, generating conflict and dragging the state into a futile and counterproductive authoritarian engagement with society. The result by 2020 will be a Russia with a severely fractured political and social space, a stagnant economy, and extremely low levels of political identification between citizens and the state to which they nominally belong. But because of the aggressive immobility of both the masses and the elite, the only way out of this situation will be through a profound and protracted crisis, sufficiently decimating individuals' prosperity and comfort that change will begin to look relatively more attractive. Given, however, that change will come in a climate of political alienation, the absence of a true public sphere, and the lack of legitimate, ingrained horizontal social institutions, it is highly unlikely that change will be democratic.

The second, more "optimistic" scenario likewise assumes that all four and a half key social phenomena remain in place but supposes one crucial difference. At some point early in the second decade of the twenty-first century, say in 2011 or 2012, the Russian government, faced with increasing social (and, indeed, intra-elite) tensions and a continually faltering economy, pushes toward maximum economic integration with the West, particularly with the European Union, and the latter reciprocates. Thus, Russia would join the World Trade Organization, conclude a free investment and trade deal with the European Union, drop visa requirements for EU citizens, and obtain visa-free travel for its own citizens to Europe. Over

time, a growing number of Russian citizens would begin to form institutional relationships and strategies based on their newfound unfettered access to the European space, for education, entrepreneurship, investment, and other purposes, compensating for the lack of institutions at home.

Russian entrepreneurs in various spheres—whether in business, education, research, or even government—do not suffer from a lack of good ideas. What they do lack, however, is an institutional environment that makes it attractive to invest in those ideas while not leaving Russia. In this regard, supporting Skolkovo and other official "modernization" projects is not enough. There is no reason to believe that the new institutions created in Russia under the banner of modernization will differ in their essence from those institutions that already exist, distorting and manipulating the law to empower officials and disenfranchise citizens.

The approach to "democratizing" Russia to date has focused on identifying the potential stakeholders in new institutions and attempting to mobilize them to reform existing ones. The problem with this approach is that it ignores the fact that existing institutions have their own stakeholders and that they, unlike the potential stakeholders of as-yet-nonexistent institutions, are already empowered. But a lowering of the barriers to the individual-level integration of Russians living in Russia into the European institutional space would have the consequence of allowing Russians to become stakeholders in European institutions. Already, certain Russians settle their commercial disputes in London and their human rights cases in Strasbourg. Russian business makes ample use of the European financial system. And elites and well-off members of the masses also avail themselves of European education, health care, and recreation.

How this would look would depend to a great degree on the creativity of policymakers in Europe. But allowing more and more Russians—and particularly those in business and academia who have the potential to drive change at home—to rely on the stability and usability of European legal and institutional frameworks to support investment in their own ideas and strategies will have two important implications domestically. First, it will enrich and empower the internationally integrated members of Russia's middle class (the internationally integrated members of Russia's elite being already rich and powerful) relative to the broader conservative constituency, dislodging them from the aggressive immobility described above.

Of particular importance, integrated citizens will gain an institutional foundation for their prosperity and comfort that nonintegrated citizens do not enjoy, increasing the attractiveness of integration for others and demonstrating a realistic, obtainable, and, crucially, institutionalized pathway for achieving success.

Second, it will draw into sharper focus the losses in opportunity cost that these same internationally integrated citizens will suffer as a result of Russia's own deinstitutionalization. Even with lowered barriers to integration with Europe, the transaction costs of relying on European institutions would still be higher than they would be if similar institutions functioned in Russia. The resulting pressure for institutional reform and harmonization may not be overtly political, but it would have the potential to revitalize public interest in the commons, and thus in community, by demonstrating a shared interest in a public good.

Taken together, this is sufficient to produce a consolidated domestic constituency for change, which will gradually drag a retrograde and reluctant (but not belligerent) state into modernity. It will be a difficult road, and it will not be completed by 2020. But if Russia and its partners are open to integration—and if we reverse the standard logic that demands democracy as a prerequisite for integration—there may yet be a way out of inertia.

Notes

1. Witness, for example, the most recent major volume on political "transition," *Democracy and Authoritarianism in the Postcommunist World*, edited by Valerie Bunce, Michael McFaul, and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). Of the twelve chapters, only one truly deals with society, and that, by Tsveta Petrova, is about Bulgaria.
2. M. Burawoy, P. Krotov, et al., "Involution and Destitution in Capitalist Russia," *Ethnography* 1, no. 1 (2000): 43–69.
3. Joel Migdal, *State in Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 11.
4. E. Shils, *Center and Periphery: Essays in Macrosociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 138, cited by Migdal, *State in Society*, 6.
5. Migdal, *State in Society*, 190.
6. D. G. Anderson, "Bringing Civil Society to an Uncivilised Place," in *Civil Society: Challenging Western Models*, edited by C. Hann and E. Dunn (London: Routledge, 1996), 115.
7. M. N. Afanasev, *Opasnaia Rossiia. Traditsii samovlast'ia segodnia* (Moscow: RGGU, 2001); O. Kharkhordin, "First Europe-Asia Lecture: Civil Society and Orthodox Christianity," *Europe-Asia Studies* 50, no. 6 (1998): 949–68; R. Pipes, *Russian Conservatism and Its Critics. A Study in Political Culture* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2005).
8. M. Levi, *Consent, Dissent, and Patriotism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 21, cited by C. Tilly, *Trust and Rule* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 19.
9. Tilly, *Trust and Rule*, 83–84.
10. Ibid., 135.
11. A. Krishna, "Do Poor People Care Less for Democracy?" in *Poverty, Participation, and Democracy*, edited by A. Krishna (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 92.
12. A. Przeworski, "The Poor and the Viability of Democracy" in *Poverty*, ed. Krishna, 126.